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DOMESTIC FOOLS AND JESTERS.



DWARF AND GIANT.



DOMESTIC FOOL.

In the times of our forefathers, before education had made much progress, even among the richer classes of society, the want of rational sources of amusement had produced a state of society of so frivolous a nature, that the strangest modes were resorted to for the purpose of killing time, and the most ridiculous amusements gratified the taste of even the highest classes. Among other customs, it was the fashion to entertain in most great families, either some unfortunate being who, generally deformed or otherwise, was of a sufficiently low stature to pass for a dwarf, or else a man sometimes half-witted, and at others possessed of great cunning, who was willing to allow himself to be the but of the company, and to amuse them by his licensed jokes, under the character of a paid jester.

This practice of retaining fools can be traced to very remote times; in England, it is supposed to have existed even as far back as the time of the Saxons. The payment of these strange appendages to dignity appears to have depended considerably on the success of their efforts, a witty saying generally producing a gratuity.

A jester was an appurtenance to the English court even in comparatively modern times; the last regular personage of this kind being *Muckle John*, the fool of Charles the First, and successor to another called *Archie Armstrong*. *Muckle John*, it appears, had a character very much unlike that which is generally attributed to his countrymen, for he is thus noticed in a letter written in his time.

There is a new fool in his (*Archie's*) place, *Muckle John*, but he will ne'er be so rich, for he cannot abide money.

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The national troubles that began during the reign of this monarch, suddenly put an end to the employment of these ridiculous attendants on royalty; so that it soon became "out of fashion for great men to keep fools;" still, however, some remains of the custom existed for a considerable time after. There is an epitaph in Berkeley churchyard, Gloucestershire, by Dean Swift, on Dicky Pearce, the Earl of Suffolk's fool, which is dated June 18th, 1728. The names of several others are also on record, as existing in the early part of last century, mostly Welshmen. The following quotation from an old satirical pamphlet, *Wits Miserie*, 1599, will give an idea of what was expected from a regular jester.

Immoderate and disordinate joy became incorporate in the bodie of a jeaster; this fellow in person is comely, in apparel courtly, but in behaviour a very ape, and no man. His studie is to coine bitter jeasts, or to show antique motions, or to sing comic songs and ballads; give him a little wine in his head, he is continually flearing and making of mouthes: he laughs intemperately on every little occasion, and dances about the house, leaps over tables, outskips men's heads, trips up his companion's heeles, burnes sack with a candle, and hath all the feats of the lords of misrule in the country: feed him in his humour, you shall have his heart. It is a special mark of him at table, he sits making faces: keep not this fellow company, for in jugling with him your wardrobes shall be wasted, your credits crackt, your crownes consumed, and time (the most precious riches of the world) utterly lost.

Great license of speech was necessarily allowed to these professed jesters, but this liberty did not always save them from punishment, which was generally whipping. Sometimes they were treated with great kindness, and the author of a small book, printed in

1634, tells us he "had knowne a great and competently wise man, who would much respect any man that was good to his foole." In an old play we find the following lamentation over the falling off of these jesters:—

Oh the clowns that I have seen in my time,
The very peeping out of one of them would have
Made a young heir laugh, though his father lay a dying;
A man undone in law the day before
(The saddest case that can be) might for his second
Have burst himself with laughing, and ended all
His miseries. Here was a merry world my masters!

The dress of these domestic clowns was always amazingly showy and grotesque, the coat motley or parti-coloured, the head-dress singularly formed, frequently with long ears, sometimes with the comb or head of a cock; hence an ignorant conceited person has been called a cockscomb, (that is, fool.) In many instances they carried a kind of official sceptre, or bauble, in their hand,—a short stick with a fool's head on the top, or with a bladder at the end, with which the fool belaboured those who offended him. The head-dress was at times hung with small bells, as well as other parts of the apparel.

So general was the fashion of having domestic fools, that in an old engraving of the family of that eminent man, Sir Thomas More, we find the family fool represented, not certainly in the grotesque habit of his order, but in plain clothes. So much notice was taken of these men, that sufficient materials are in existence to form a history of the life and witticisms of many of these degraded creatures.

The wit of these fools was displayed in various ways, sometimes in the shape of biting satire, at others, by a mischievous practical joke, likely to create a laugh at the expense of an individual; but many of these unhappy creatures were possessed of the kindlier feelings of humanity, and loved their masters for the kind treatment they received at their hands. The following anecdotes are instances of the species of art exhibited by jesters.

The Lord North begged old Bladwell for a foole, (though he could never prove him so,) and having him in his custody as a lunatick, he carried him to a gentleman's house one day, that was a neighbour. The Lord North and the gentleman retired awhile to private discourse, and left Bladwell in the dining-room, which was hung with a fair hanging. Bladwell walked up and down, and viewing the imagery, spied a fool at last in the hanging, and, without delay, draws his knife, flies at the fool, cuts him clean out, and lays him on the floor. My lord and the gentleman coming in again, and finding the tapestry thus defaced, he asks Bladwell what he meant by such a rude uncivil act: he answered, "Sir, be content, I have rather done you a courtesy than a wrong, for if ever my Lord North had seen the fool there, he would have begged him, and so you might have lost your whole suite."

A tale is told of one John Low, the King of Scotland's fool.

This simple man stood in a place where many lords and other gentlemen came by, but the silly fool neither greeted nor put off his hood to any of all the lords that came by. The which thing, a certain courtier of the king's house seeing, rebuked the fool sharply and beat him a little, and threatened him that he would whip him, except he would greet the next lords that he saw. Poor John said that he would gladly greet the next lords that he saw, if the courtier would tell him how he might know a lord from another man, for he said that he knew not a lord from another man. "Then," quoth the courtier, "you shall know lords by these tokens, they wear velvet and have gold upon their necks. "Well," quoth the fool, "I shall learn to ken them as well as I can."

And upon the next day, as soon as John came abroad, he saw a great number of lords' mules, standing at the court gates, trapt with velvet, and costly trimmed with gold; wherefore he, remembering his lesson that the courtier had taught him: straightway, as soon as he saw

them, he went unto them, and cried a great while to every one, one after another, "Good day my lord! good day my lord!" even until the courtier, his schoolmaster, came out and saw him making courtesy and greeting the mules. As soon as the fool saw his schoolmaster, he said unto him, "Am I not a good son now?" "You are mad," quoth the courtier. "for these are mules, and not lords." "Why," quoth the fool, "but these wear velvet and gold on their heads." The courtier beat the fool, and bade him learn better to ken a lord.

The following instance of affection, and at the same time of the force of imagination in the case of one of these licensed jesters, has been placed on record.

A certain German prince, of a haughty and tyrannical disposition, was afflicted with a disease, which his medical attendants considered incapable of removal, unless the patient endured some sudden shock or fright, sufficiently violent to produce the fear of death. The readiest plan that occurred to their minds to produce this effect, was a sudden and unexpected immersion in the canal, which watered the garden of the palace. The mode of cure, however, was much more easily agreed upon than put in practice; not one of his courtiers or attendants being willing to undertake the task and risk the anger of their master,—the natural consequence of such an apparent outrage on his person. In this dilemma the poor fool was applied to. The half-witted creature was a great favourite with the prince, and the only being towards whom he acted with any degree of kindness; the consequence was a reciprocal affection on the part of the jester. He readily undertook to throw the prince into the canal while taking his usual walk. The plan succeeded, and the prince was restored to health. His rage, however, was unbounded at the daring act, and the fool was ordered to be beheaded. The fatal hour arrived, and then the kind intention of the poor creature caused a change in the mind of his master; but his dignity had been offended, and he was determined not to allow the escape of the culprit, without at least the fear of death. The executioner's axe was raised, and at the same time a small quantity of cold water was suddenly dashed on the bare neck of the fool, but he moved not afterwards, and when lifted up was dead; sudden fear having produced the same effect as if the executioner had performed his office in earnest.

WHOEVER commits a fraud is guilty not only of the particular injury to him whom he deceives, but of the diminution of that confidence which constitutes not only the ease but the existence of society. He that suffers by imposture has too often his virtue more impaired than his fortune. But as it is necessary not to invite robbery by supineness, so it is our duty not to suppress tenderness by suspicion; it is better to suffer wrong than to do it, and happier to be sometimes cheated than not to trust.—*Rambler*.

WE are not to choose for ourselves what parts to act on the stage of life, but to act those well which are allotted, and appointed for us. It is a great misfortune, that people so commonly amuse themselves with idle and imaginary schemes, how they would behave, and what they would do, were they in such or such a situation. They would be very good and very exemplary, were they very great, very learned, very wealthy, very retired, very old, and the like. But they neglect the gift which is in them, and the work which is appointed for them, while they are thinking of that which is not. Alas! their state of probation is their present state, whatever it be. And when they are called to an account before the judgment-seat of Christ, it will be a poor excuse to say, that their thoughts were so taken up with dreams and reveries, how they would manage were they in another station, that they did not attend to the discharge of those duties which belonged to their own proper calling.—*TUCKER*.

THE SUICIDE.

BENEATH the beech, whose branches bare,
Smit with the lightning's livid glare,
O'erhang the craggy road,
And whistle hollow as they wao;
Within a solitary grave,
A slayer of himself holds his accursed abode.

Lower'd the grim morn, in murky dies
Damp mists involv'd the scowling skies,
And dimm'd the struggling day;
As by the brook, that ling'ring laves
Yon rush-grown moor with sable waves,
Full of the dark resolve he took his sullen way.

I mark'd his desultory pace,
His gestures strange, and varying face,
With many a mutter'd sound;
And ah! too late, aghast I view'd
The reeking blade, the hand imbrued;
He fell, and, groaning, grasp'd in agony the ground.

Full many a melancholy night
He watch'd the slow return of light;
And sought the pow'rs of sleep,
To spread a momentary calm
O'er his sad couch, and in the balm
Of bland oblivion's dews his burning eyes to steep.

Full oft, unknowing and unknown,
He wore his endless noons alone,
Amid th' autumnal wood:
Oft was he wont, in hasty fit,
Abrupt the social board to quit,
And gaze with eager glance upon the tumbling flood.

Beckoning the wretch to torments new,
DESPAIR, for ever in his view,
A spectre pale, appear'd;
While, as the shades of eve arose,
And brought the day's unwelcome close,
More horrible and huge her giant-shape she rear'd.

"Is this," mistaken Scorn will cry,
"Is this the youth whose genius high
Could build the genuine rhyme?
Whose bosom mild the favouring Muse
Had stored with all her ample views,
Parent of fairest deeds, and purposes sublime."

Ah! from the Muse that bosom mild
By treacherous magic was beguiled,
To strike the deathful blow;
She fill'd his soft ingenuous mind
With many a feeling too refined,
And roused to livelier pangs his wakeful sense of woe.

Though doom'd hard penury to prove,
And the sharp stings of hopeless love;
To griefs congenial prone,
More wounds than Nature gave he knew,
While Misery's form his fancy drew
In dark ideal hues, and horrors not its own.

Then wish not o'er his earthy tomb
The baneful nightshade's lurid bloom
To drop its deadly dew:
Nor oh! forbid the twisted thorn,
That rudely binds his turf forlorn,
With spring's green swelling buds, to vegetate anew.

What though no marble piled bust
Adorn his desolated dust,
With speaking sculpture wrought?
Pity shall woo the weeping Nine,
To build a visionary shrine,
Hung with unfading flowers from fairy regions brought.

What though refused each chanted rite?
Here viewless mourners shall delight
To touch the shadowy shell:
And Petrarch's harp, that wept the doom
Of Laura, lost in early bloom,
In many a pensive pause shall seem to ring his knell.

To soothe a lone, unhallow'd shade,
This votive dirge sad duty paid,
Within an ivied nook:
Sudden the half-sunk orb of day
More radiant shot its parting ray,
And thus a cherub-voice my charm'd attention took.

"Forbear, fond bard, thy partial praise;
Nor thus for guilt in specious lays
The wreath of glory twine:
In vain with hues of gorgeous glow
Gay Fancy gives her vest to flow,
Unless Truth's matron-hand the floating folds confine.

"Just heaven, man's fortitude to prove,
Permits through life at large to rove
The tribes of hell-born woe:
Yet the same power that wisely sends
Life's fiercest ills, indulgent lends
Religion's golden shield to break the embattled foe.

"Her aid divine had lull'd to rest
Yon foul self-murderer's throbbing breast,
And stay'd the rising storm:
Had bade the sun of hope appear
To gild his darken'd hemisphere,
And give the wonted bloom to nature's blasted form.

"Vain man! 'tis heaven's prerogative
To take, what first it deign'd to give,
Thy tributary breath:
In awful expectation placed
Await thy doom, nor impious haste,
To pluck from God's right hand, his instruments of death."

WARTON.

THE pangs that wicked men feel are not always written in their foreheads. Though wickedness be sugar in their mouths, and wantonness an oil to make them look with cheerful countenance; nevertheless, if their hearts were disclosed, their glittering estate would not greatly be envied.—HOOKER.

If you desire to enjoy life, avoid unpunctual people. They impede business and poison pleasure. Make it your own rule not only to be punctual, but a little beforehand. Such a habit secures a composure which is essential to happiness. For want of it many people live in a constant fever, and put all about them into a fever too. To prevent the tediousness of waiting for others, carry with you some means of occupation, a Horace, or Rochefoucault, for example, books which can be read by snatches, and which afford ample materials for thinking.—*The Original*.

MANKIND, from the earliest ages, have been prone almost to idolize those to whom they were indebted for any weighty benefits, or to whom they looked up as inventors of useful arts, or masters of hitherto occult sciences. Gratitude indeed demands that great and original geniuses, whom God has enriched with extraordinary talents, by the due exercise of which they have become benefactors of the human race, should be loved and valued highly for their services; but when we look only at the instrument, and see not the hand of Supreme Benevolence that employs it for our benefit, we then overvalue man, and undervalue God; putting the former into the place of the latter, and making an idol of him; and if any will not worship this idol, a clamour is raised against them, and they are almost persecuted.—KIRBY.

COUNSEL which Catwy the Wise gave to his pupil Taliesin.

THINK before thou speakest;

First, what thou shalt speak;
Secondly, why thou shouldst speak;
Thirdly, to whom thou mayest have to speak;
Fourthly, about whom or what thou art to speak;
Fifthly, what will come from what thou mayest speak;
Sixthly, what may be the benefit from what thou shalt speak;
Seventhly, who may be listening to what thou shalt speak.

Put thy word on thy fingers' ends before thou speakest it, and turn it these seven ways before thou speakest it; and there will never come any harm from what thou shalt say.—*The Doctor*.

THE HARVEST-MOUSE, (*Mus messorius*.)

THE Harvest-Mouse is the smallest of the British quadrupeds: so small is it, that a full-grown one weighs no more than sixty-five grains. Sometimes this is extremely common in the fields, and does much harm to the agriculturist by devouring the corn, but in general it is not met with in any great numbers. The nest of the Harvest-Mouse is a very singular construction; it is generally suspended on some growing vegetable, a thistle, a bean-stalk, or some adjoining stems of wheat, with which



NEST OF THE HARVEST-MOUSE.

it rocks and waves in the wind; but to prevent the young from being dislodged by any violent agitation of the plant, the parent closes up the entrance so uniformly with the whole fabric, that the real opening is with difficulty found. This nest is most artificially platted, and composed of blades of wheat, nearly round, and about the size of a cricket-ball; it is so compact and well closed, that it can be rolled across a table without being injured. The female has as many as eight or nine in a litter, and if some cause which we cannot understand, did not prevent their increase, we should soon be overrun with them.

The following observations by the author of the *Journal of a Naturalist*, seem to bear upon this point.

Mankind appear to be progressively increasing. It was an original command of the Creator; and the animals domesticated by man, and fostered for his use, are probably multiplied in proportion to his necessities: but we have no reason to suppose that this annual augmentation proceeds in a proportionate degree with the wild creatures upon the surface of the globe; and we know that many of them are yearly decreasing, and very many that once existed have even become extinct. That there are years of increase and decrease ordained for all the inferior orders of the creation,

common observation makes manifest. In the years 1819 and 1820 all the country about us was overrun with mice; they harboured under the hassocks of coarse grasses, perforated the banks of ditches, occasioned much damage by burrowing into our potato-heaps, and coursed in our gardens from bed to bed even during daylight. The species were the short-tailed meadow-mouse, and the long-tailed garden-mouse, and both kinds united in the Spring to destroy our early-sown pease and beans. In the ensuing Summer, however, they became so greatly reduced, that few were to be seen, and we have not had anything like an increase since that period.

It is probable that some disease afflicted them, and that they perished in their holes, for we never found their bodies, and any emigration of such large companies would certainly have been observed; yet the appearance and disappearance of creatures of this kind leads us to conclude, that they do occasionally change their habitations.

A large stagnant piece of water in an inland county, with which I was intimately acquainted, and which I very frequently visited for many years of my life, was, one summer, suddenly infested with an astonishing number of the short-tailed water-rat, none of which had previously existed there. Its vegetation was the common products of such places, excepting that the larger portion of it was densely covered with its usual crop, the smooth horse-tail. This constituted the food of the creatures, and the noise made by their champing it, we could distinctly hear in the evening at many yards' distance. They were shot by dozens daily, yet the survivors seemed quite regardless of the noise, the smoke, and the deaths around them. Before the winter this great herd disappeared, and so entirely evacuated the place, that a few years after I could not obtain a single specimen. They did not disperse, for the animal is seldom found in the neighbourhood, and no dead bodies were observed. They had certainly made this place a temporary station in their progress from some other; but how such large companies can change their situations unobserved in their transit is astonishing. Birds can move in high regions and in obscurity, and are not commonly objects of notice; but quadrupeds can travel only on the ground, and would be regarded with wonder, when in great numbers, by the rudest peasant."

SLIPS of the tongue are sometimes found very inconvenient by those persons who, owing to some unlucky want of correspondence between their wits and their utterance, say one thing when they mean to say another, or bawl out something which the slightest degree of forethought would have kept unsaid. But more serious mischief arises from that misuse of words which occurs in all inaccurate writers. Many are the men, who merely for want of understanding what they say, have blundered into heresies and erroneous assertions of every kind, which they have afterwards passionately and pertinaciously defended, till they have established themselves in the profession, if not in the belief, of some pernicious doctrine or opinion, to their own great injury, and that of their deluded followers, and of the commonwealth.—*The Doctor*.

How often has it been seen that sons not otherwise deficient in duty toward their parents, have, in the most momentous concerns of life, taken the course most opposite to that in which they were trained to go; going wrong where the father would have directed them aright, or taking the right path in spite of all inducements and endeavours for leading them wrong!

The son of Charles Wesley, born and bred in Methodism, and bound to it by all the strongest ties of pride and prejudice, became a papist. This, indeed, was but passing from one erroneous persuasion to another, and a more inviting one. But Isaac Casaubon also had the grief of seeing a son seduced into the Romish superstition; and on the part of that great and excellent man, there had been no want of discretion in training him, nor of sound learning and sound wisdom.

Archbishop Leighton, an honour to his church, his country, and his kind, was the child of one of those fire-brands who kindled the Great Rebellion; and Franklin had a son, who, notwithstanding the example of his father, (and such a father!) continued steadfast in his duty as a soldier, and a subject.—*The Doctor*.

ACCOUNT OF MUMBO-JUMBO, OR AFRICAN GOD OF THE WOODS.

St. James's Fort, Coast of Gambia.

THE Company's gardens are on the main at Gillifree, where the governor and factors have country-houses. One of the factors invited me to be present at the christening of his child, but cautioned me, whatever I saw, neither to be frightened, nor take the least notice of anything, for that no harm could come to me if I remained quiet. As I had no reason to suspect his intentions, for he had shown me every civility ever since my first arrival, curiosity tempted me to accept his invitation, and having no doubt but that I was master of my feelings, I went with him. We took with us a little cask of rum, some toys of beads, &c., and the child was christened after the English manner.

There were present between four and five hundred persons of both sexes. A large ring was formed, and before every girl we wished to see dance, one of the people dropped his handkerchief, when she came out immediately and danced. On a sudden, the women all fell on their faces, and we beheld a figure, nearly nine feet high, and of a most frightful aspect, walk in. He was dressed in a long coat, which nearly reached the ground, made of straw and the bark of trees, and he was crowned with a wisp of straw, formed something like a bee-hive.

This figure I found was the Mumbo-Jumbo, who first complimenting my host and myself, and the other Europeans who were present, asked by his interpreter (the method of speaking he always adopts), what was brought him? Having received his present, he said he came to be merry with us, and began to jump about till he came opposite the prettiest girl present; when, from under his jacket, he pulled out a great stick, with which he beat her in such a manner, that I thought she would never be able to move again, and yet no one dared come forward to assist her. He would have beaten her more, had he not been tired from the great weight of the coat and cap. Neither the face nor hands of the figure could be in the least seen. He now went away, but in a little time returned, behaving more civilly, and remaining with us about ten minutes, after which he left us entirely, which I was not sorry for, as he spoilt all our mirth.

We remained there all night, and the next morning, walking with my friend in the country, we saw the coat of Mumbo-Jumbo under a great tree. I was for examining it, but my companion dissuaded me from doing so, and when we arrived at the Fort, he gave me the following account, which, as I always found him a man of the strictest veracity, I have no reason to disbelieve.

"Whenever any one enters the society of Mumbo-Jumbo, he swears never to divulge the secret to any woman, or to any person who is not a member of it; and that this secret may be preserved to themselves, no boys are admitted under sixteen years of age. By this means the women are kept in the greatest subjection, for, upon any dispute between a man and woman, Mumbo-Jumbo is sent for, and he always decides in favour of the man. The reason that the poor girl was so beaten was, that that night Mumbo-Jumbo was performed by a young man who some time before wished to pay attention to her, though she preferred another person. Having complained of his behaviour, he had been reprimanded by his friends, for which she paid very severely.

"No man is allowed to come armed before Mumbo-Jumbo. The people all swear by him, and the oath

is irrevocable. There are very few towns without one of these figures to frighten the poor women with, and if any one of the society divulges the secret, he is sure to be put to death by a member of it.

"Mumbo-Jumbo is likewise absolute over the men, for he always has a strong party with him, besides which, every one he calls upon is obliged to assist him. He is never seen in the daytime, but his coat and cap lie under one of the larger trees in the neighbourhood; no one is allowed to touch them, and they are always watched. For this reason the figure is always called 'Mumbo-Jumbo, or God of the Woods.'"

My friend told me of an English governor, who, some years ago, having affronted one of this society, and being on the main one evening with the crew of his pinnace, when Mumbo-Jumbo came among them with a large party, and, after dancing as usual, went up to the governor and stabbed him. The crew, endeavouring to assist him, and attack Mumbo-Jumbo, in a very few minutes shared the same fate, excepting one, whom they sent over to the Fort to tell the tale.

Another story he told me was, that the king, Jagra, in 1727, having a very inquisitive wife, was so weak as to disclose this secret to her, and she revealed it to some other women of her acquaintance. This very soon got to the ears of some who were no friends to the king, and who, dreading lest if the affair were known, it would put a period to the subjection of their wives, took the coat, and putting into it one on whom they could depend, went to the town of the king, and sending for him out, taxed him with it, which he not denying, they sent for his wife, killed them both on the spot, and made a new king, without being called to an account.

[From the JOURNAL OF A SAILOR, 1749-50.]

COURTEOUS FORBEARANCE.

A GENTLEMAN, making a morning call upon a late county member, of great taste and scrupulous courtesy, was accompanied into the library by a beautiful kid, which he found standing at the street-door. During the conversation the animal proceeded round the room, examining the different objects of art with ludicrous curiosity, till coming to a small bronze statue placed upon the floor; he made a but at it and knocked it over. The owner of the house taking no notice, his visitor observed,—"That kid is a special favourite, I perceive; how long have you had it?" "I had it!" exclaimed the virtuoso in an agony, "I thought it had been yours." "Mine!" said the gentleman, with no less astonishment, "it is not mine I assure you." Whereupon they both rose, and by summary process ejected the intruder.—*The Original.*

WHEN we see such paternal care manifested for the welfare and maintenance in existence of beings so frail, that a mere touch would dissipate them, we cannot but assent to the observation of the Psalmist, that "His tender mercies are over all his works," the least and most insignificant as well as those that appear to occupy the most elevated place in the animal kingdom; and we may feel a comfortable assurance, built on this ground, that the eye which regards even these seemingly-insignificant creatures, will, if we cast not off our confidence, never overlook us, or be indifferent to our welfare.—KIRBY.

A picture, though with most exactness made
Is nothing but the shadow of a shade.
For even our living bodies (though they seem
To others more, or more in our esteem),
Are but the shadow of that Real Being,
Which doth extend beyond the fleshly seeing,
And cannot be discerned until we rise
Immortal objects for immortal eyes.—G. WITHER.

GOOD BREEDING.

A GENTLEMAN is a Christian in spirit, that will take a polish; the rest are but plated goods, and however excellent their fashion, rub them more or less, the base metal will appear through.

An Englishman making the grand tour towards the middle of the last century, when travellers were more objects of attention than at present, on arriving at Turin, sauntered out to see the place. He happened to meet a regiment of infantry returning from parade, and taking a position to see it pass, a young captain, evidently desirous to make a display before the stranger, in crossing one of the numerous water-courses with which the city is intersected, missed his footing, and in trying to save himself lost his hat. The exhibition was truly unfortunate; the spectators laughed, and looked at the Englishman, expecting him to laugh too. On the contrary, he not only retained his composure, but promptly advanced to where the hat had rolled, and taking it up, presented it with an air of unaffected kindness to its confused owner. The officer received it with a blush of surprise and gratitude, and hurried to rejoin his company;—there was a murmur of applause, and the stranger passed on.

Though the scene of a moment, and without a word spoken, it touched every heart, not with admiration for a mere display of politeness, but with a warmer feeling for a proof of that true charity "which never faileth." On the regiment being dismissed, the captain, who was a young man of consideration, in glowing terms related the circumstance to his colonel; the colonel immediately mentioned it to the general in command, and when the Englishman returned to his hotel, he found an aide-de-camp waiting to request his company to dinner at head-quarters. In the evening he was carried to court, at that time, as Lord Chesterfield tells us, the most brilliant court in Europe, and was received with particular attention.

Of course, during his stay at Turin, he was invited everywhere, and on his departure he was loaded with letters of introduction to the different States of Italy. Thus a private gentleman, of moderate means, by a graceful impulse of Christian feeling, was enabled to travel through a foreign country, then of the highest interest for its society, as well as for the charms it still possesses, with more real distinction and advantage than can ever be derived from the mere circumstances of birth and fortune, even the most splendid.

I think I cannot more appropriately conclude this anecdote than by adding the excellent, and excellently expressed, advice of Polonius to his son, on his departure for a foreign country. The precepts are admirably adapted to form a man of the world and a gentleman, in the best sense of the terms, and, in my opinion, are well worth committing to memory by those whom they concern.

..... Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hooks of steel;
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
Of each new hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware
Of entrance into quarrel! but, being in,
Bear it, that the opposer may beware of thee.
Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice;
Take each man's censure, but reserve the judgment.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy rich, nor gaudy;
For the apparel oft proclaims the man.

Neither a borrower, nor a lender be,
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
This, above all, to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

The Original.

A MERCHANT who had lately died at Isfahan, and left a large sum of money, was so great a niggard, that for many years he denied himself and his son, a young boy, every support, except a crust of coarse bread. He was, however, one day tempted by the description a friend gave of the flavour of cheese, to buy a small piece; but before he got home he began to reproach himself with extravagance, and instead of eating the cheese he put it into a bottle, and contented himself, and obliged his child to do the same, with rubbing the crust against the bottle, enjoying the cheese in imagination.

One day that he returned home later than usual, he found his son eating his crust, and rubbing it against the door. "What are you about, you fool?" was his exclamation. "It is dinner-time, father; you have the key, so I could not open the door: I was rubbing my bread against it, because I could not get to the bottle." "Cannot you go without cheese one day, you luxurious little rascal? you'll never be rich!" added the angry miser, as he kicked the poor boy for not being able to deny himself the ideal gratification.—*Sketches of Persia.*

WHEN Abbas the Great was hunting in the little town of Netheny, which lies in a narrow valley between two high mountains, he met, one morning, as the day dawned, an uncommonly ugly man, at the sight of whom his horse started. Being nearly dismounted, and deeming it a bad omen, he called out in a rage to have his head struck off. The poor peasant, whom they had seized, and were on the point of executing, prayed that he might be informed of his crime. "Your crime," said the king, "is your unlucky countenance, which is the first object I saw this morning, and which had nearly caused me to fall from my horse." "Alas!" said the man, "by this reckoning, what term must I apply to your majesty's countenance, which was the first object my eyes met this morning, and which is to cause my death!" The king smiled at the wit of the reply, ordered the man to be released, and gave him a present instead of taking off his head.—*Sketches of Persia.*

SKETCHES OF NEW SOUTH WALES

No. XI.

MOUNT VITTORIA, WITH AN ACCOUNT OF THE STOCKADES AND IRON-GANGS.

THE annexed sketch is a view of the eastern aspect of Mount Vittoria, which was taken from a point nearly five miles off, on one of the lateral broken ridges which jut out from the western road towards Cox's River. The gap directly above the letter A shows the low neck over which the new line of road passes mentioned in a former paper, and also where the perpendicular masses of rock on that side of the ridge terminate. At the cone above the letter B, the mountain-range ceases, and falls abruptly, which is also the case with Mount York, about two miles and a half distant in a northerly direction. The gap in the low range, above the letter C, is close to a sheep-run and station of Mr. Norton's, and is to be distinctly seen from many parts of the main road. The intervening flat lands, shown in the sketch, below the mountains towards Mount Vittoria, are neither possessed of a good soil or pasture, but in many places are very stony and barren, and the parts denoted *clear* in the sketch are swampy places, destitute of timber, appearing of a beautiful green colour. The land towards Cox's River improves, and is fit either for cultivation or grazing stock, being intersected with several well-watered rivulets.

When the new road was first opened, the "Pass" seen in the sketch was not properly secured by railing, and two men who were passing on horseback happened to quarrel at the spot. They dismounted and fastened their horses to a post of the rails, and commenced fighting, when one of them fell over and was killed. The deep recesses and dingles of Mount Vittoria, as well as of the adjoining range of mountains, abound with the *warrang* and *wallaroo* (rock-kangaroos), flying squirrels of various descriptions, and the wild pheasant. This bird is invariably found in the most romantic and inaccessible hollows and glens of the mountains, and is decidedly of the pheasant species, not materially differing from the English pheasant, except in the plumage, which is not so brilliant. The shape of the Australian pheasant is very similar to the English, and its size and manner of living the same. It roosts upon the trees by night, and seeks its food in the lower brakes and bushes by day. They make the same whirring noise when they run, and fly slow, and the male is more beautiful than the female. On the head are blackish feathers, mixed with brown; the neck and upper part of the breast are tinged with deep purple, and the feathers of the breast, the shoulders, the middle of the back, and the wings, are of a rich deep brown. But the tail of the male-bird is very beautiful. It consists of four feathers, generally more than two feet long, which curl elegantly at the extremities: these are of a rich brown colour, marked with transverse streaks of black.

The narrow valley between the high ranges of Mount Vittoria and Mount York, is noted for being the situation of the first Stockade erected for the use of iron-gangs, and men employed to work in chains upon the roads for punishment. It was situated about half a mile from the Pass, upon a gentle rising ground above the swamp at the bottom. Near the Stockade were the barracks for the soldiers, constables' huts, and a small cottage, &c., for the officers; on the opposite side of the swamp was the residence of the commissariat officer, a neat thatched cottage, and a storehouse built of logs.

In wet weather it was very inconvenient to cross the swamp, and the officers, together with their men, contrived to build a bridge across, which no doubt remains in good preservation to the present time. From a point on the top of the mountain, near where the new road branches off from the old, a bridle-path commences, which admits of a very fair descent into the valley. Many travellers would admire the romantic beauties of this descent between the two mountains as they went along. Its narrow windings and grotesque passages, sometimes overhung by huge masses of rock, and again overshadowed by most luxuriant shrubs, the water in places trickling down from the sides of a rocky indentation forming a small pool at the base, icy cold, tend at any rate to remove the tediousness of the way which one might otherwise experience.

Although the situation of this Stockade was undoubtedly the best to be procured in the neighbourhood, yet very often the men were badly off for water in the dry seasons. The little that made its way down the ravine was sucked up by the swamp, so that wells were here and there dug, which afforded a supply, but not of good water. This swampy flat continues in a north-westerly direction, about two miles, to the base of Mount York, where it opens into a wide expanse of flat forest-land, of a sandy soil.

As soon as the principal difficulties had been got over at Mount Vittoria, and the road had begun to assume its proper form, this Stockade was deserted, and another formed under Mount Walker, about

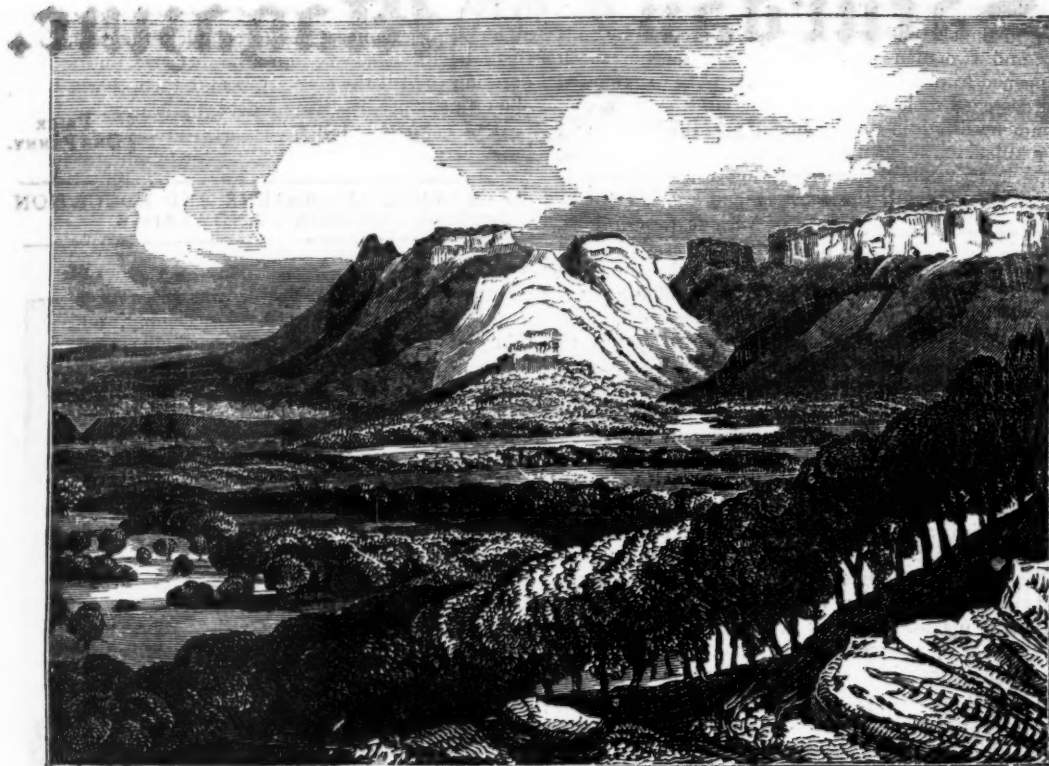
twelve miles to the westward, where another considerable cutting was necessary to complete the road. As this latter Stockade was on a larger scale, and I had occasion to visit the scene now and then, I will conclude this paper by giving a description of it.

It was situated on a long narrow tongue of land, immediately under the above-named mountain, around which, in a sharp angle, flowed a never-failing rivulet, one of the tributaries of Cox's River. The width of the ridge on which the Stockade was built could not much exceed a hundred yards, so that water (which is most necessary where so many men are collected together in a limited space) was plentiful and at hand. High, steep forest-ridges, stony, and but thinly clad with verdure, encircled the spot, and frowned like the gigantic walls of a prison all around. Moreover, the place was very solitary, unfrequented by travellers, and perfectly out of the way. But the busy hands of men were soon at work, and the silent glen resounded with the clanking of chains, and the noise of hundreds of workmen.

This Stockade was built, as that at Vittoria, nearly in the form of a square, the huts for the prisoners being erected of bark, facing inwards, and joined together, except at the entrance. The inner square is divided into several compartments for the different companies of prisoners, by rail-fencing, on which they hang and dry their clothes, &c., after washing; and, about four yards from the back of these huts, on the outside, was erected a strong fence of split timber all round, about fourteen or fifteen feet in height, having two great gates at the entrance. Fronting this gateway, on either side, were erected the soldiers' barracks, in two rows. These were also built of bark and split wood, with mud chimneys, and some of them were plastered and white-washed inside; and at the head of these barracks stood the officers' quarters, forming a kind of parallelogram with the Stockade. These quarters consisted of a shingled cottage, with two tolerably-sized rooms, back-kitchens, &c., having a verandah in front. The guard consisted of a captain's company. On one side was the hospital and storehouse, and the tents of the commissary; on the other were the cooking-shed, and butchers' and bakers' houses, the overseers' and constables' huts, &c. These buildings, all erected in a hurry, and in a very little time, being of course merely temporary, formed, as it were, a little town, and contained generally between seven and eight hundred inhabitants.

The prisoners are guarded by day and night. They march out of the Stockade in the morning in companies of twenty-four each, guarded by two soldiers and a constable. Every man receives at the gates the implements he uses when at work, as shovels, pickaxes, iron bars, hatchets, and the like, and these are again returned to the proper person when they enter the Stockade at night. A lamp is fixed at each corner of the outer fence, and at the entrance, so that any one could be seen attempting an escape, and sentinels are placed at night both inside and out, commanding every way, who call the word every half hour,—“No. 1. All's well,”—and so on throughout the whole number. Before these lamps were put up, fires were kept burning at the corners, to give light, which was attended with great inconvenience.

A soldier would be tried by a court-martial if a prisoner escaped,—so strict is the military duty on these occasions. At noon, the prisoners are marched in to dinner, for which they are allowed an hour. They often grumble at their mess, and refuse to touch it. In these cases, the commissariat officer, whom they call their “head cook,” is sent for, who decides



MOUNT VICTORIA, NEW SOUTH WALES.

whether the ration and meat be sufficiently good or not. If his decision be in favour of the ration, the prisoners will commence eating, and laugh at the trouble they have occasioned, for they frequently object, merely to annoy the overseers and others over them. The whole body connected with the Stockade are rationed by contract for the year, at so much per man, for which tenders are submitted to the commissariat department, in Sydney, at a fixed time. The lowest tender is taken, if proper securities can be given by the parties tendering. A pound of fresh beef, and a pound of bread is the allowance, I believe, for the prisoners, *per diem*, in addition to which they get soup every other day.

Two men, selected by the prisoners themselves, inspect the meat before it is cooked, and they have the power of objecting if they please; but what is termed "tip," and a fig of tobacco, very often, no doubt, silences their objection.

The prisoners amuse themselves in various ways when shut up,—some are seen polishing the horns of bullocks, others cutting devices and figures thereon, as a ship, a crown, an anchor, as well as a few lines of rhyme; and these, when finished, they make into a spirit-flask, and either sell or present them to some one. Some may be seen reading, others writing,—some making saws out of a rude bit of iron, and otherwise employed, according to their genius, while others may be seen listening to a long story, told by a shrewd fellow whom they call a *lawyer*,—some playing the fool, and some doing nothing.

When the Stockade was first formed at this place, the prisoners were allowed fires in the inner square, around which they used to sing at night—all joining in chorus, which made a most tremendous uproar. But they abused this indulgence by doing mischief and their fires and singing were not allowed.

Frequently when they marched out of a morning to their several stations, a company would strike out into a song, which the magistrate on duty (a surveyor of roads) objected to, and gave orders to the overseers to stop them. They could not succeed, however; but one morning the magistrate happened to be present when they were marched out, and, soon after they had passed his tent, one or two prisoners commenced a loud song in defiance. The magistrate immediately halted the whole party,—inquired, and found out the man who commenced singing, and had him severely flogged on the spot; this put an end to their singing.

It might naturally be supposed, that with such a number of able men and means, the most stupendous undertaking might be overcome in a reasonable short time, but the case is otherwise; the generality of these prisoners are an idle, lazy set, who merely raise the axe to let it fall again, without any exertion on their part; and it is only when the overseer is present that they appear busy and in earnest. There are some amongst them, however, who at times work well, as if they took an interest in the undertaking, or in expectation of receiving an advantage. But some of them often refuse to work at all, and choose rather to stand a flogging every other day, until both magistrate and flogger are tired of them. The soldiers merely remain with them on guard, but neither speak, nor interfere with the work. They find it an irksome duty, but the prisoners think it scarcely a punishment. This Stockade, altogether, formed a peculiar scene of animation amid the solitude of the mountains.

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